

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image input system connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes comprising:
  - 5 a computer having a plurality of software programs corresponding to the plurality of operation modes,

wherein at least one of occasions when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a
  - 10 power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer, the software program
  - 15 corresponding to the operation mode of said image input device is automatically started.
2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the operation modes include at least one of an image playback mode, image sensing mode, panoramic image sensing mode, and slideshow playback mode.
- 20 3. The system according to claim 2, wherein when the operation mode is the image playback mode, image browsing software is automatically started on said computer, and loads all images in said image input device.

4. The system according to claim 2, wherein when the operation mode is the image sensing mode, image sensing software is automatically started on said computer, and displays a preview image and senses an image on said computer.
5. The system according to claim 2, wherein when the operation mode is the panoramic image sensing mode, panoramic image generation software is automatically started on said computer, automatically loads images, which are sensed in the panoramic image sensing mode and stored in said image input device, and automatically executes a synthesis process of the loaded images.
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6. The system according to claim 2, wherein when the operation mode is the slideshow playback mode, slideshow playback software is automatically started on said computer, automatically loads images in said image input device, and automatically displays the loaded images on a screen of said computer.
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7. The system according to claim 1, wherein when the power supply of said image input device is turned off while said image input device is connected to said computer and given software is running, the software executes a predetermined process.
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8. The system according to claim 7, wherein the predetermined process is one of a process for

automatically ending the software after a disconnection process from the image input device is done, a process for continuing to run the software, and a process for prompting the user to select if the software ends or

5 continues to run.

9. The system according to claim 1, wherein when the operation mode of said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer and given software is

10 running, one of a process for automatically ending the software after a disconnection process from the image input device is done, a process for continuing to run the software, and a process for prompting the user to select if the software ends or continues to run is

15 executed and, after that, software corresponding to the new operation mode is automatically started.

10. The system according to claim 1, wherein the operation mode is switched by a fixed switch or dial switch on said image input device, or an

20 operation/setup menu in an LCD panel.

11. An image input system connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes comprising:

a computer having a single software program which

25 has a plurality of modes corresponding to the plurality of operation modes,

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wherein at least one of occasions when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said 5 computer, or when said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer, that one of the plurality of modes of the software in said computer, which corresponds to the operation mode of said image 10 input device, is automatically started.

12. The system according to claim 11, wherein the operation modes include at least one of an image playback mode, image sensing mode, panoramic image sensing mode, and slideshow playback mode.

15 13. The system according to claim 12, wherein when the operation mode is the image playback mode, the software is automatically started in an image browsing mode, and loads all images in said image input device.

14. The system according to claim 12, wherein when 20 the operation mode is the image sensing mode, the software is automatically started in an image sensing mode, and displays a preview image and senses an image on said computer.

15. The system according to claim 12, wherein when 25 the operation mode is the panoramic image sensing mode, the software is automatically started in a panoramic

image generation mode, automatically loads images, which are sensed in the panoramic image sensing mode and stored in said image input device, and automatically executes a synthesis process of the

5 loaded images.

16. The system according to claim 12, wherein when the operation mode is the slideshow playback mode, the software is automatically started in a slideshow playback mode, automatically loads images in said image

10 input device, and automatically displays the loaded images on a screen of said computer.

17. The system according to claim 11, wherein when the power supply of said image input device is turned off while said image input device is connected to said 15 computer and the software is running, the software executes a predetermined process.

18. The system according to claim 17, wherein the predetermined process is one of a process for automatically ending the software after a disconnection 20 process from the image input device is done, a process for continuing to run the software, and a process for prompting the user to select if the software ends or continues to run.

19. The system according to claim 11, wherein when 25 the operation mode of said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image

input device is connected to said computer and the software is running, the software is automatically switched to a mode corresponding to the new operation mode.

5 20. The system according to claim 11, wherein the operation mode is switched by a fixed switch or dial switch on said image input device, or an operation/setup menu in an LCD panel.

10 21. A method of controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a plurality of software programs corresponding to the plurality of operation modes, comprising:

15 the step of automatically starting the software program corresponding to the operation mode of said image input device, when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said 20 image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.

22. A method of controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a 25 plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a single software program which has a plurality

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of modes corresponding to the plurality of operation modes, comprising:

the step of automatically starting that one of the plurality of modes of the software in said computer,

5 which corresponds to the operation mode of said image input device when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said image input

10 device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.

23. A storage medium that stores a control program for controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a plurality of software programs corresponding to the plurality of operation modes,

said control program comprising:

a code of the step of automatically starting the software program corresponding to the operation mode of said image input device, when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when

25 said image input device is switched to another

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operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.

24. A storage medium that stores a control program for controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a single software program which has a plurality of modes corresponding to the plurality of operation modes, said control program comprising:

10 a code of the step of automatically starting that one of the plurality of modes of the software in said computer, which corresponds to the operation mode of said image input device when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said 15 image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.

20 25. A program product that comprises a control program for controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a plurality of software programs corresponding to the 25 plurality of operation modes,

    said control program comprising:

a code of the step of automatically starting the software program corresponding to the operation mode of said image input device, when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of  
5 said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said image input device is switched to another operation mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.

10 26. A program product that comprises a control program for controlling an image input system, which is connectable to an image input device having a plurality of operation modes, and includes a computer having a single software program which has a plurality of modes  
15 corresponding to the plurality of operation modes,  
said control program comprising:  
a code of the step of automatically starting that one of the plurality of modes of the software in said computer, which corresponds to the operation mode of  
20 said image input device when said image input device is connected to said computer, when a power supply of said image input device is turned on after said image input device is connected to said computer, or when said image input device is switched to another operation  
25 mode while said image input device is connected to said computer.